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Adam Smith

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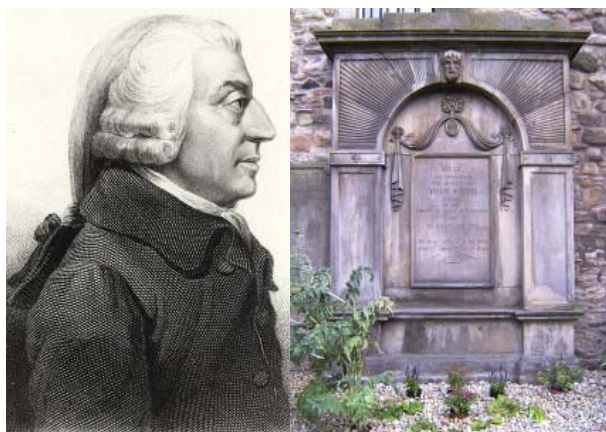
Posted on [22/07/2013](#) by [John Cairns](#)

Two hundred and twenty-three years ago today Adam Smith was interred in the Canongate Kirkyard in the Burgh of Canongate, now part of the city of Edinburgh. He was 68 years old. In comparison to some of the stars of the Enlightenment, his had been a quiet life; nor was he to see the horrors that were about to unfold in France under the Jacobins and the Committee of Public Safety.

From Kirkcaldy, he was educated at the Universities of Glasgow and Oxford (though not impressed with the latter). He became Professor first of Logic and then of Moral Philosophy at his Scottish *alma mater*. From 1763-1766 he travelled in France as tutor to the 3rd Duke of Buccleuch – an appointment that gave him a pension that made him independent for the rest of his life.

In his course on moral philosophy, he dealt with the virtue of justice. Student sets of his lectures on jurisprudence were published last century. From a lawyer's point of view, his most important pupil was John Millar, who propounded Smith's theories of justice from the Civil Law Chair in Glasgow from 1761-1801, educating many lawyers of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Smith's legacy to Scots law and lawyers was greater than one might think.

Any reader of Smith's correspondence will get a sense of the man, and indeed understand why "le bon David" was so fond of him. His friend Robert Adam designed an elegant neo-classical gravestone for him.



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